

INFORMATION REPORT

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CONCLUSIONS

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1. The Korean War has greatly increased the burden on Chinese railways and, at the same time, has reduced the number of personnel to operate the railroads. Large numbers of operating and technical transportation personnel have been ordered to North Korea. At first, qualifications with respect to political purity and physical fitness were very strict, and were accompanied by a restriction against sending persons over the age of 35. This age restriction, however, was lifted last July. Incomplete figures compiled by the Transportation Administration of the Ministry of Railways show that a total of 38,000 railway personnel have already been sent to North Korea; the bulk of these are operating and technical personnel.
2. Recent reports from the various railway administrations to the Transportation Administration, Ministry of Railways, show that all railway lines in China are facing an acute shortage of railway personnel, particularly persons directly concerned with the actual operation of trains. An investigation made in July by the Ministry of Railways shows that there were 532,700 persons in the service of the Ministry at that time; these figures include administrative personnel for the railroads and railway shops, public security personnel, workers, and other service personnel connected with the railways.
3. The Transportation Administration, Ministry of Railways, anticipates that more personnel will have to be sent to Korea as long as the war continues. Training schools established by the Ministry last Spring to train medium-grade technical personnel will be able to turn out only about 3,000 trainees for actual railway service, but these will not be ready before the end of 1951. This means that there will be many difficulties in maintaining railway transportation during the next three months. The political bureaus of the various railway administrations have inaugurated campaigns to overload trains (i.e. to load each train over and above its specified load limit) and to increase overtime work. In addition, unnecessary passenger traffic will be cut drastically to economize on the use of trained railroad manpower.

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1. [] Comment. The departure of a Chinese Communist railway transportation corps of 2,500 men to North Korea in July was reported [] [] for other reports concerning railway personnel problems.

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